

A Woman Dreams Of Home: Yakima Park, Wash.

Tuckered out by her uphill
Tug-of-war with gravity,
She gives in to a stone's invitation,
Sits down and watches the trail
Move on without her,
As lungs accept, gratefully,
Lightheaded air sobered by Spruce and Pine.

Under her clothes, the heat of climbing cools.
That magical change of light she came to see,
Yellow Orange Red Rose Mauve
Is hours off. She waits, thinking, even
The blinding radiance of Mt. Rainier
Is pacified by sunset.

Her eyes tour hundreds
Of ice formations, looking to be amused
By the sudden shape of a hand, a satin elbow.
But the glacier's mile-off sculpture,
For all its ruffle and flash,
Holds nothing known a woman could trifle with,
Wears out the keenest eyes, leaves the mind
Empty, or numb with glare.

She nods in a world of her own:
Heavy eyelids draw to a close like drapes.
Those frigid wastes that left her vision cold
Release fragile echos. Trickles lost
In a maze of snow shift into her doze
And assume there the comfortable voices
Of rinsed china draining in a sink.

--George Amabile